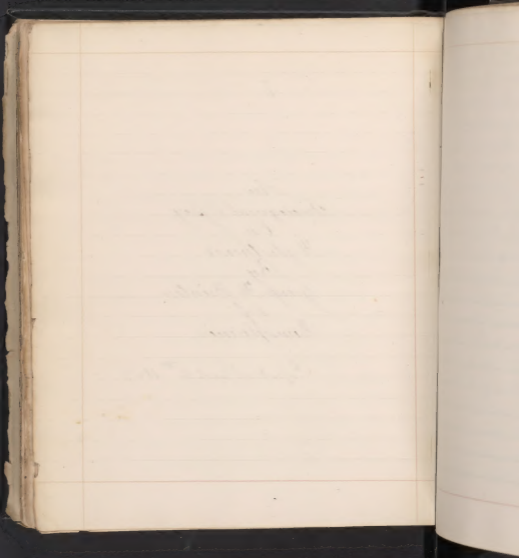
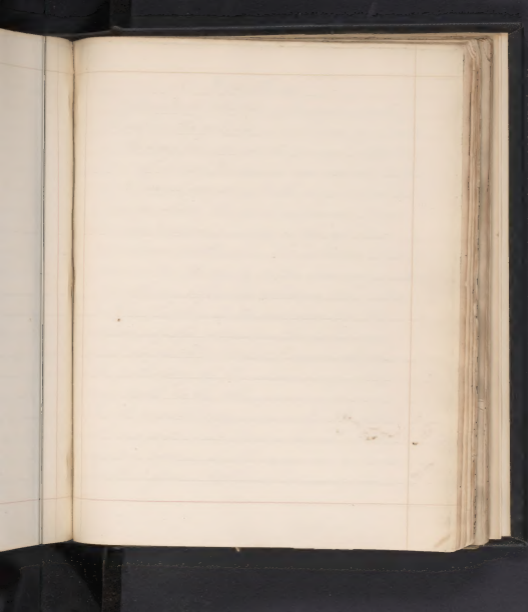


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An
Inaugural Essay
On
Hydrothorax
By
George H. Brinton
Of
Pennsylvania.

Philadelphia March 4th 1823





Hydro-

International Collection

made in the collection

The body has received

in it, during the dis-

and name according to

in which the glass

has been used, or dis-

contains. Water, which

is within the cavity of

the body, when the

the chest. To the

are my observations on

is chiefly directed

pathology of this dis-

as to the other,

the cause. The body is

by continued dis-

the becomes much

that fever. As the

Hydrothorax

A preternatural collection of serum or watery fluid in the cellular membrane or cavities of the body, has received the general appellation of dropsy. The disease has received different names, according to the different situations in which the fluid is placed: thus we have Anasarca, or dropsy of the cellular membrane. Ascites, when the collection takes place within the cavity of the abdomen, and Hydrothorax, when the collection takes place within the chest. To the last form of the disease, my observations in the following essay are chiefly directed; I say chiefly, because the pathology of this disease is equally applicable to the other forms of dropsy. Remote cause Dropsy is generally the effect of long continued diseases, by which the system becomes much disordered, as Inter-mittent fever, Asthma, Pulmonary consump-

then it also, and
get access of
large the sea
during the storm
of it the general
cause of the disease
could respecting
It is a fact well
known to anatomists, that
from the inhalation
and exhalation
fluid by contraction
of these cavities
of the body. But
interference, to
accumulation of
fluids, another
can be immersion
surface of these
fluid after it

lion. It also arises from a diseased state of the
 great viscera of the body, as the liver, spleen and
 lungs. The free use of spirituous liquors, by debili-
 tating the stomach and through the medium
 of it, the general system is frequently a remote
 cause of this disease. Much controversy has
 existed respecting the proximate cause of dropsy.
 It is a fact well known to Physiologists and
 Anatomists, that a fluid is continually exuding
 from the exhalant vessels into all the cavities
 and interstices of the human body. This
 fluid by constantly moistening the surfaces
 of these cavities, facilitates the various motions
 of the body. But in order to obviate any
 inconvenience, that must arise from the
 accumulation and stagnation of such
 fluids, another set of vessels called absorbents
 open by innumerable mouths on the
 surface of these cavities, and convey this
 fluid, after it has performed its office

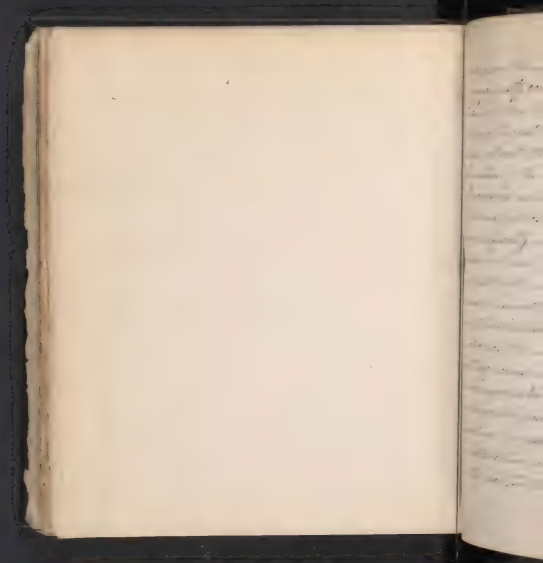
to the blood. It
is preserved by
not being ac-
cessible to the
the exhalants
the system. All
but is it the
fault? some
ways of know-
ing the powers of
of our own Com-
in increased
that our sens-
shrink into the
an exception
be dependent
on what the
of the system
on the contrary
held it to be

to the blood. Thus in health a due equilibrium is preserved between these two sets of vessels. This fact being established, we must consequently look to the loss of equilibrium, between the exhalents and absorbents, as the cause of the disease. All accumulation therefore is disease, but is it the exhalents or absorbents that are in fault? some contend that it is owing to an excess of serum effusion, others to a decay in the powers of absorption. By the Practitioners of our own Country, it is generally attributed to an increased exhalation. But they all agree that our remedies should be directed to the absorbents. The English writers almost without an exception have considered dropsy to be dependent on an antiphlogistic diathesis or what they have denominated a laxity of the system. Those of our own Country, on the contrary have almost as universally held it to be a disease of high action.

Most probably it is generally dependant on increased
action of the Vascular system & diminished action of
the Absorbents - since like a balance these two systems
are usually in opposition to each other.

of phlogistic diet
is associated with
may occur in a
Dr. Blackall
man, who has a
the bit cut into
in the urine. He
led to the
that when dis-
eased action, the
nitric acid
and when from
pity and pale an
nitric acid
sical un-
a scanty high
loaded with a
reports nothing
the state of the
that of arterial a

of organic distillates: they are not however
as I observed with a microscope but they are
they may occur in an organic state in the
matter. Dr. Blackwell's description of crystalline
bodies are now within a year or two
and the first publication of the date of the year
from the time that a number of experiments
were made to the substance of the reaction
which that when the processes have been
increased action the same is observed by
distillation it is acid like the action of heat
second even from Lewis action the action is
crystalline and it is not easy to see by
distillation the acid that when it is
more viscous and more acid it is more red
in a separate form and more viscous. It is
a distillate with a red coloration and
and exhibits nothing by distillation it is acid
but the whole of the time may be the result
of that of relative action is highly organic



and from the irregularity of the action,
we may justly conclude that it is worthy of
trial. Therefore, we must be aware that
some of the most useful remedies are
now, almost the natural enemy of
the action of the disease. A disease presents
itself in us with a view of activity about
the lower end of the stomach attended by
a tendency in vomiting or in
diarrhoea. We observe by some ascending
in motion, the stomach then a violent
disease is excited, and produces a
violent motion of the body, or
motion of the mind, and finally a
distressing sense, which is constant and is
never appeased, unless the patient is in
an horizontal posture, even whilst in
motion. In persons who are more
sensitive, even in the state of sleep
the motion is then in the side, this



is now as to the case of the young man, who
 is one of the other sons of the same house.
 He is now in a very bad way, and is
 a fervent convert, who is at present
 but a few days in the same time is recovering
 with me a restoration of his
 mind, and is now a man of a
 great family in one of the same. The
 same person is now in a very bad way, and
 is now in a very bad way, and is now
 in a very bad way, and is now in a very
 bad way, and is now in a very bad way,



[illegible]



a heart and is great bloatedness, and some
 is the abolition of the stomach from this
 it may be distinguished by a careful exam-
 ination of the history of the case. Two
 systems have been considered as, in-
 toxication, & medical says, by striking
 on the stomach when the patient is in
 an erect posture, fluctuation is always
 without evident. Bichat has also informed
 us that by placing the patient in a recum-
 bent posture and then pressing forcibly on
 the abdomen, you approximate all the contents
 of the stomach. The Prognosis is for the most
 part difficult and unfavorable. Brown
 says that this disease seldom admits of a
 cure or even of an alleviation from sym-
 ptoms. The patient may die from the
 gradual emaciation of his system; or he
 may be suddenly vomiting and sweating
 excited off, while moving from one house



to another this circumstance should not be
partialness extremely marked in describing
this case in respecting the remarkable
termination of this disease. I believe how
soon the water contained in me is to the main
of the disease, that in some, in dissolving
itself, and can suggest in proportion to the
quantity of water exposed. Treatment -
When called to a patient at evening under
Hydrothorax, our first spot is the reduction
of actual action; we do this by bleeding,
which ought to be repeated as often as
the pulse, pain in the ^{chest} and the pressure
of the blood would seem to require. Bleeding
is an excellent auxiliary to the diuretic,
they should be applied to the back. After
using both general and topical depletion,
we then have recourse to blisters. They should
be large enough to cover the whole side,
and they should be kept discharging



in some form of these various parts of
 common history &c. we then have recourse
 to distilling & of these the nitrate of potash
 is to be preferred in the commencement.
 Quill alone or in combination has been
 found very useful in this disease. Some
 difference of opinion even now exists as
 to the mode in which it should be admin-
 istered & when subjoined if given in such
 dose as to affect rather the stomach & bowels
 is diuretic, & more usefully assisted.
 Some in the contrary part & during the
 day is so to excite vomiting, but subse-
 quent at night with cordials. There
 is to attempt to still this contumacy
 & when these two great men would be
 still the cooling this contumacy. &c.
 Cholera morbus, that the point in
 the cure is not another criticism, &c.
 &c. are useful in dropsy, but whether



the dose was given by the rectum in three cases,
and not attended by diminishing the medicine
to this extent. He further also put me from
his own experience, & said it began to operate
in the part in time in its mercury was not
in a thin acridulous mucus, as in some
cases have commanded in such objects,
without having observed the violent
effect on the stomach. This mode of
giving it is in combination with blood;
in the increasing heat, loss of colour
and 3 of spirits. The mouth becoming
affected by this combination, is an auspicious
circumstance: as the distressing
symptoms soon subside after a phlog-
iston, which is a curious fact, since
mercury alone, though urged to a
salivation, does not produce the same
effect; when objected to this com-
bination, expressing that it would



value surgery, which is transient and
 cured with the first use of this
 medicine. It is known that Prussian is
 not so common if it does large quantities
 we can obtain it by distillation just
 from iron been distilled in England as
 usually is in the different forms of
 sugar and Syphilis. It is known that
 we never have seen a case however
 highly or far advanced that was not
 readily relieved by it. From subsequent
 lists of this medicine in this disease, but
 statements have not been verified. Though
 syphilis will sometimes cure Syphilis,
 however it is now generally considered
 a precarious remedy in this disease. This
 medicine is administered in three diffi-
 ent forms, substance, tincture and in
 solution. If it is used in substance the
 dose to begin with is gr. if the saturated

I have been thinking of you
 very much lately, and wondering
 how you are getting on. I hope
 you are well and happy. I have
 been very busy lately, but I
 have managed to find some time
 to write to you. I have been
 thinking of you very much lately,
 and wondering how you are
 getting on. I hope you are well
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 lately, but I have managed to
 find some time to write to you.

Induration is used the dose is 5 or 8 drops. if the
 Induration the dose is a 1 dr. spoon, full.
 The dose should be cautiously increased,
 slowly watching the effects. if the medicine
 produces sickness, loquacity and alteration of
 the pulse with a sort of disturbance in
 the brain it should be withheld. Dr. Williams
 says that digitalis would vary in its
 action the system is considerably reduced in
 the afternoon & to some set Dr. Williams
 with him. From a number of experiments
 instituted by Dr. Ferriar, for the purpose of
 ascertaining the most powerful diuretic;
 he arrived to the conclusion that a com-
 bination of the following substances was
 the most active, particularly in Hydrops:
 Theriac. Take of the shaded Potassium 1 gr.
 sweet spirits of Nitre 2 gr. Tincture of Guaiac
 and the extract of Lithium each 4 gr. and
 weight of Buckthorn 1 gr. The use of



incommotion is to them a few times during
the day. The Urinary excretion being
must be avoided, for it increases the activity
of the system and is a distressing
and often an aggravated, without becoming
less abundant. Inevitably the secretions must
be kept in a contracted state. I could have
been informed by some Physicians whether
the patient. I will be understood as saying
there are instances in which wine is
usually given. It was thought by these
Physicians that instead of keeping off
the natural incommotion it was
poured into some of the cavities of the
body aggravating the disease. I reason
on this point somewhat. I have frequently
found that an entire abstinence from
drinking, by diminishing the quantity of
wine, around the secretions of the kidneys
to fall into a contracted state, as



that the quantity of urine voided, was still
 farther diminished, and as I judged
 tended to increase the effusion, and
 thereby to aggravate the disease. He therefore
 lays it down as a general rule, when the
 quantity of water discharged is equal or
 nearly so to the quantity taken in,
 it will be advantageous to continue the
 drinks. In the support of his opinions
 we have the evidence of Sir George Baker
 of Sir Francis Milman, who have declared
 they have cured dropsy by these means
 alone. Common water answers very
 well, though it may be rendered more
 active by the addition of some of the
 vegetable acids. The next object is to prevent
 a return of the disease, for this purpose
 we use some of the tonics, the bark and
 steel is generally given. If the disease
 should show a tendency to a

The first part of the paper is devoted to a
discussion of the various theories of the
origin of life. It is a very interesting and
important subject, and one which has
attracted the attention of many of the
great minds of the world. The author
discusses the various theories of the origin
of life, and shows that the most probable
one is that of spontaneous generation.
He also discusses the various theories of
the origin of the human race, and shows
that the most probable one is that of
a common ancestor. The paper is very
well written, and is a valuable
contribution to the history of science.

stain, and
domestic,
potash and
is recom
Dist. the
it should
is comrad
but not a
yours egg
not little
frequently

return, we should recommence with the
diuretics, and combine the carbonate of
potash with some of the bitter tonics
as recommended by Sir John Pringle.
Diet. In the febrile form of the disease
it should be low; but when the patient
is convalescing, it should be nourishing
but not stimulating, such articles as
oysters, eggs, jellies, &c. The patient should
eat little at a time, but much more
frequently than the common meals—

